1-1-2007

Existential anxiety and religious commitment

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Existential Anxiety and Religious Commitment

BY

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THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

2007
YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

6-22-2007
Date

Thesis Director

6-22-2007
Date

Department/School Head

Running head: EXISTENTIAL ANXIETY AND RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Paul Tillich's theory of existential anxiety and religious commitment. The study attempted to determine if there was type of existential anxiety that religion might perpetuate or alleviate. Two hundred and twenty-nine individuals who endorsed a Christian or Catholic belief system completed a series of surveys on an internet website; participants were recruited through various Christian message boards or a standardized email that was sent to various church leaders; the measures of the assessment were Tillich's theory of existential anxiety, death anxiety, moral anxiety, meaninglessness anxiety, religious commitment, and personality dimensions. Results indicated a significant relationship with Tillich's theory of existential anxiety. Death, moral, and meaningless anxieties were significantly related to religious commitment. The study also controlled for personality dimensions which indicated that personality might have a mediating effect between religious commitment and moral anxiety; personality also significantly affected some of the relationships between Paul Tillich's subtypes of existential anxiety and subtypes of religious commitment. Implications of these finding and suggestions for future directions are discussed.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my thanks to my thesis chair Dr. Joseph Williams, and committee members: Dr. Russell Gruber for his council and guidance and Dr. Ronan Bernas for his wisdom throughout the thesis process. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Anu Sharma for all of her time, guidance, and supervision throughout my education, to my family for their support, and to my wife, Charity Pelak, whose sacrifice and support I will forever be indebted to. Correspondence concerning this thesis should be addressed to Daniel Pelak, at eternalparadox9669@yahoo.com.

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Existential Anxiety and Religious Commitment

This study attempted to answer the following questions: What is the relationship between religiosity and anxiety? Does religion function as a coping mechanism for anxiety? Is there a type of anxiety that religiosity seems to alleviate or perpetuate? Specifically, this study compared coping behaviors of religious involvement and commitment with death anxiety, moral anxiety, and meaninglessness anxiety, while controlling for personality variables through a partial correlation. In previous research Hathaway and Pargament concluded that some styles of religious coping maybe hinder an individual's health whereas other religious coping styles may enhance an individual's health (1990). The results from this study were addressed to determine if various types of religious commitment could be viewed as adaptive coping mechanism in dealing with various types of existential anxieties or whether those coping behaviors would perpetuate those anxieties.

Paul Tillich's Theory

Existentially, an individual's primary motivation is death, and the fundamental drive is the inevitability of nonbeing (Thorne, 1963). Existential anxieties are derived from confrontations with existential givens (Lucas, 2005). Paul Tillich expanded on the conceptualization of existential anxiety and theorized that existential anxiety and motivation can be categorized into three domains: death anxiety, meaninglessness anxiety, and moral anxiety (1952).

In Tillich's theory, anxiety of death and fate is the primary force in man's motivation. Tillich defined death anxiety as the "threat of nonbeing" and the "complete loss of self which biological extinction implies," (Tillich, 1952). Tillich also stated that

because death "threatens man as a whole" that it threatens an individual's spiritual and ontic self-affirmation (1952). Therefore Tillich theorized that death anxiety has two spheres through which a man's anxiety is channeled: anxiety of emptiness/meaninglessness and anxiety of guilt/condemnation also known as moral anxiety (Tillich, 1952).

Anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness refers to the absence of a spiritual self-affirmation from which meaning is derived (Tillich, 1952). Tillich expounded on this sense of spirituality by stating that anxiety of meaninglessness "is anxiety about the loss of an ultimate concern, of meaning which gives meaning to all meanings," (1952). He further stated, "anxiety is aroused by the loss of a spiritual center" (Tillich, 1952). Anxiety of emptiness is seen as a threat of non-being as it relates to the connection to the spiritual life (Tillich, 1952).

The final sphere that Tillich believed threatens an individual's sense of being is anxiety of guilt and condemnation or moral anxiety (1952). Tillich stated that anxiety of guilt and condemnation refers to an individual's moral being and the anxiety produced by morality is experienced through a sense of guilt (1952). For the parameters of this experiment, Tillich's typology of existential anxiety will be referred to as death anxiety, meaninglessness anxiety, and moral anxiety.

Tillich also theorized that the dominate sphere in which an individual experienced anxiety has changed due to the paradigm shift within culture (1952). Tillich stated that the end of the ancient period was characterized by an awareness of nonbeing and therefore could be characterized as primarily operating from a sense of death anxiety (1952). According to Tillich, the first paradigm shift occurred in the Western world with

the development and the expansion of the Judeo-Christian message in which individuals began to shift their focus of anxiety from a fear of death and nonbeing to a fear of guilt and condemnation causing individuals to become preoccupied with moral standards (1952). The second paradigm shift occurred during the Reformation when the absolutism began to diminish and liberalism and democracy ignited a shift to meaning and being (1952). Therefore, according to Tillich's theory, individuals in today's Western society should experience the main sphere of existential anxiety through meaninglessness anxiety (1952).

Theological background

Theologically, Christians conceptualized this phenomenon and referred to it as the "conviction of the Holy Spirit." This concept has been based on The Gospel of John 16: 7-11; in this text, Jesus is talked to his disciples and stated that the Holy Spirit will come into the world to convict the world in regard to three aspects of life: sin, righteousness and judgment. The text further states that God would convict the world in regard to sin because they did not believe in the divine nature of Christ. Sin parallels Tillich's concept of meaninglessness anxiety because of the nature of God/ Jesus was to impart meaning and being into his followers (John 10:10). Righteousness reflects Tillich's moral anxiety; the literal translation of the Greek word for righteousness (*δικαιοσύνη)* means "equity of character or act; right standing in reference to the eyes of other men" (Zondhiates 1990). Judgment parallels Tillich's death anxiety in that judgment refers to the finality and end of all things.

Death Anxiety

In 1981, Lilliston and Brown conducted a study on college students' perception of religion at a secular university. The results indicated that the majority of college students believed that religion was a "defensive crutch" to anxiety rather than an adaptive solution. One of the main areas of research that has been studied in regard to religion is the psychological role of religiosity as a mediator for death anxiety. Death anxiety can be defined as anxiety over the inevitability of death and possible nothingness. It has been theorized that there is a relationship between death anxiety and religion although previous studies have produced conflicting results. Many studies have failed to support this hypothesis of a unidimensional relationship between religiosity and death anxiety (Hoelter, 1979). In most studies death anxiety has not been significant; however, some studies have shown that religiosity has been correlated to higher levels of guilt and happiness (Francis, 2003). Hoelter and Epley, and Kraft and associates found positive correlations between a derived subtype of death anxiety and religiosity (1979), (2001).

Recent research on death anxiety focused on terror management theory. In terror management theory, the awareness of one's vulnerability leads to the awareness of one's mortality which produces anxiety and is coped with through external cultural buffers (Florian 1997). Greenburg's analysis of terror management theory has shown that the anxiety produced in his experiments was in direct relation to death rather than other anxiety provoking experiences (1994). Although death anxiety has been studied, other motivational variables have been ignored including a need for a system of moral absolutes also known as moral anxiety. Another possible variable that has received minimal attention is a desire for purpose and meaning in life or meaninglessness anxiety.

Moral anxiety

Although the concept of morality has received a considerable amount of attention, the anxiety that is produced from those moral standards and the role of religious involvement in morality appears to have been neglected. Moral anxiety refers to feelings of stress or anxiety when confronted with a moral dilemma related to one's faith or belief system. Moral anxiety is "the need to do good." Scheeper theorized that moral attitudes are primarily affected by individual characteristics including religious involvement and religious beliefs (1998). Scheeper's study concluded that religious factors were significantly influential to the development of moral attitudes and were more influential than educational level or income (1998). Also, Walker (2003) addressed William James' view of saintliness in regard to moral helpfulness and how religion or spirituality has been disregarded or ignored in the literature of moral psychology, even though sufficient evidence exists. Additionally, no research appears to exist on anxiety produced by religious morality; although Florian and Mikulincer have found in their analysis of terror management theory that the judgment of a transgression appears to be directly related to the meaning an individual has to his/ her own mortality (1997). Additionally, Berman, Weems, and Stickle concluded that greater levels of moral anxiety were associated with depression.

Meaninglessness anxiety

Existential theory has hypothesized that religion has acted as a conduit to repress anxiety related to death and meaning in life (Weems, 2004). Meaninglessness anxiety incorporates a strong need for meaning in an individual's life and refers to the presence of anxiety or stress when meaningfulness is questioned or removed from the individual's

"need to have purpose." Thorne stated that the master motive of an individual is to live a self actualized life which incorporates actualizing potentialities and opportunities; when self actualization is threatened by either perceived or actual failures anxiety is produced (1963).

Fry found that personal meaning, involvement in formal religion, participation in spiritual practices, level of importance of religion, comfort derived from religion, inner peace, and accessibility to religious resources were all predictors of well being (2000). In a similar study Davis and Robinson, concluded that higher existential meaning scores were associated with lower levels of anxiety (2003). Davis and Robinson also concluded that religious beliefs provide purpose and meaning to existence which helps the individual live with a greater sense of well-being. Sturgeon and Hamley found that intrinsic oriented Christians reported less anxiety on trait and existential anxiety measures (1979). Berman, Weems, and Stickle also concluded that higher meaninglessness scores were indicative of higher levels of anxiety (2006). King et al. added that meaning in life is related to positive affect and that the strongest predictor of a day being experienced as meaningful was the amount of positive affect experienced in that day (2005). This study examined the relationship between religious commitment and existential anxiety due to the lack of research assessing the relationship between existential anxiety and religious commitment and the conflicting nature between religiosity and anxiety.

Religious Commitment

Does religious involvement increase or perpetuate one's ability to cope with existential anxieties due to religiosity's capacity to operate as a coping mechanism (Wong-McDonald, 2000, Park 1990, Fabricatore, 2004)? Ferriss concluded that religious

involvement, religious behaviors, and beliefs were factors that contributed to the happiness of individuals in the United States; of all the factors that Ferriss studied he found that religious involvement and affiliation contributed to the largest amount of variance with happiness (2002). Additionally, Davis and Robinson found that greater spiritual well-being was associated with lower trait anxiety in at-risk male youth which indicated that religiosity or spirituality may operate as a coping mechanism for various anxieties (2003). Davis and Robinson also concluded that higher existential anxiety scores were associated with lower anxiety scores (2003). Therefore, it is necessary to consider an individual's religious commitment.

In the literature, religious commitment has been broadly defined and studied; religious commitment can be defined as adherence to religious beliefs, practices, and traditions. Some researchers argued that these variables reflect religious motivation or coping style (Fabricatore, 2004) while others stated they may be more reflective of religious commitment (Hettler, 1998). The latter researchers argued that the two concepts are not synonymous and that an individual may be intrinsically motivated or have a collaborative coping style but may still have a low level of commitment to his/her belief system; thereby demonstrating how these concepts can be independent of each other. These behaviors are also believed to be the coping behaviors for stress and anxiety in a religious orientation (Hettler, 1998). Religious commitment is believed to be conceptualized into three distinct phenomena: belonging, behavior, and belief (Mockabee, 2001). Mockabee concluded that these three phenomena can be assessed by measuring three unique aspects of religiosity: ritualistic behaviors, private devotion, and psychological commitment (Mockabee, 2001). Ritualistic behavior, such as attendance,

measures belonging (2001). Private devotion incorporates scripture reading and prayer which measure the behavioral aspect of religious commitment (2001). Belief, according to Mockabee, can be measured through psychological commitment which he defined as salience or guidance that religion provides in one's life (2001).

Denominational Expectations

According to Mockabee many methods for measuring religious commitment are flawed; Mockabee states they do not take into account the normative expression of an individual's religiosity based on his/her religious belief system (2001). Religious commitment has commonly been assessed through a point system; in this approach a point is given for each activity or increasing level of activity; this approach becomes problematic because of the variability in commitment behaviors that different faiths or denominations may adhere to and belief systems which express a more frequent adherence to behavioral practices maybe overrepresented in the religious commitment research (Hettler, 1998; Mockabee, 2001). Additionally Leege, Wald, and Kellstedt argue that religious commitment scales can be bias toward Evangelical Protestants who have higher levels of prayer and Bible reading than Roman Catholics but who may not be more committed to their faith. In Leege's view, "the threshold for a 'good member' of the religious community may differ by religious tradition" (1996). Therefore it was important to assess the cognitive expectations of the individual to determine if his/her behavioral adherence was an attempt to comply with his/her religious beliefs of a good member which acted as a coping mechanism or if increased behavioral compliance was more indicative of religious coping.

Personality Variables

One possible variable that may mediate the relationship between religiosity and existential anxiety may include personality variables. One of the prominent ways that researchers have sought to understand the relationship between religiosity and personality is through the Five Factor Model (FFM). The Five Factor Model includes measures of openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism. According to Piedmont openness is "the proactive seeking and appreciation of new experiences"; agreeableness is "the quality of one's interpersonal interactions along a continuum from compassion to antagonism"; conscientiousness is "the persistence, organization, and motivation exhibited in goal-directed behavior" (2005). Piedmont found that spirituality scales appeared to correlate with openness and agreeableness within the factor five model; whereas, agreeableness and conscientiousness correlated highly with religious items (Piedmont, 2005).

The current literature did not appear to distinguish a clear relationship between existential anxiety and an Introversion-Extraversion (I-E) orientation. Francis defined extroversion as an attitude in which one's interest is directed to an aspect outside of one's self and is focused on the aspects of the environment, and introversion was defined as an attitude in which one's interest is directed and is focused introspectively at one's self (2003). Maltby found no significant relationship between Allport's religious motivation and intrinsic or extrinsic orientation and defensive mechanism scales (1997). However, the literature stated that introversion has been associated with higher levels of anxiety; thus, inferring the possible relationship between anxiety and introversion (Verma, 1980).

Neuroticism is the tendency to experience negative emotions including anxiety, depression, and hostility (Piedmont, 2005). Neuroticism would have a high correlation to anxiety and therefore should be associated with greater levels of existential anxiety. Current research suggests that religiosity is not associated with neuroticism (Francis, 2003) although it is not known if an individual's level and type of existential anxiety is associated with neuroticism.

Also, Piedmont identified four avenues in which the FFM could be useful in spiritual/ religious research (1999). Two of his four uses of this model appear to be applicable to this study. The first use of the FFM is conceptualizing an individual's motivation in seeking spiritual/ religious goals. This would be useful in understanding if a certain type of motivation is associated with higher levels of existential anxiety and in examining an individual's cognitive motivation and their behavioral commitment. The second of Piedmont's uses for the FFM is identifying religious and spiritual dimensions that do not overlap with the FFM. Utilizing the FFM can help determine if the different types of existential anxiety or religious commitment are associated with different dimensions of the FFM or if they represent a more unique spiritual/religious construct (Piedmont, 1999).

Present Study

The role of religion has prominently been assumed as a construct or a "defensive crutch" for avoiding anxiety (Lilliston, 1981), particularly anxiety related to death. Although these views have been documented since before Freud, little research has been conducted. Most of the research has produced problematic results and/or minimal understanding of this concept; one of the weaknesses of the previous research has been a

simplistic approach to a complex phenomenon. Schaefer suggested that psychological adjustment and religiousness are multidimensional construct, in which belief, motivation, problem solving style and other variables affect an individual's level of anxiety (1991).

This study focused on religious commitment and its relationship to death, moral, and meaninglessness anxiety in order to evaluate the possible role in religious coping activities. The relationship between existential anxiety and religious commitment does not appear to have been addressed in the previous research. Additionally, past research has focused on religious motivation and coping as activities related to death anxiety or general life stress/anxiety. This study differentiated itself from previous research by evaluating the level of anxiety associated with moral standards and meaninglessness living. Also, in regard to religious commitment, this study examined the frequency of religious behaviors of the participants as a possible means of reducing anxiety/stress. This study synthesized a number of the concepts previously incorporated in other studies to uncover the complex nature of religious coping. The study also controlled for personality variables, which have been rarely addressed in the previous research regarding religious motivation and did not appear to have been controlled for when evaluating religious commitment. For the parameters of this study, controlling for personality dimensions refers to statistical procedure in which personality dimensions are isolated to ensure that the relationship between existential anxiety and religious commitment is not a byproduct or an expression of personality. Additionally, it is impossible to scientifically control for personality as a unitary construct; therefore, this study attempted to control for the FFM dimensions of personality collectively and independently.

This study is attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between religiosity and anxiety?
2. Does religion function as a coping mechanism for anxiety?
3. Is there a type of anxiety that religiosity seems to alleviate or perpetuate?

The first set of hypotheses of this study determined if Paul Tillich's theory of existential anxiety can be demonstrated by evaluation of relationships between moral anxiety, meaninglessness anxiety, and death anxiety. Theoretically, these concepts appeared to be significantly related with an individual's need to find purpose in life and to do good; meaninglessness anxiety directly affects an individual's fear of ultimate nonbeing through providing a sense of purpose and direction; thereby, deflecting a sense of finality, and moral anxiety superimposes a moral code in hopes to avoid judgment (Tillich, 1952). These concepts appeared to be related conceptually; however, no research currently suggests that they are related. In order to determine if Tillich's theory is valid a relationship between death anxiety, moral anxiety, and meaninglessness anxiety must be established; therefore it was hypothesized:

1. Meaninglessness anxiety will be significantly related to death anxiety.
2. Moral anxiety will be significantly related to death anxiety.
3. Moral, meaninglessness, and death anxiety will be significantly related to Tillich's Existential anxiety as measured by the Existential Anxiety Questionnaire (EAQ).
4. The relationship between death anxiety and moral and meaninglessness anxiety will remain significant when personality is controlled for through a partial correlation.

The second set of hypotheses that the study examined was the relationship between death anxiety and religious commitment. Previous studies have suggested conflicting results between the relationship with death anxiety and religiosity; some failed to support the hypothesis of a unidimensional relationship between religiosity and death anxiety where in other studies others have found a positive correlation between religiosity and death anxiety (Hoelter, 1979; Kraft, 2001). Recent research on death anxiety focused on terror management theory. In terror management theory, the awareness of one's vulnerability leads to the awareness of one's mortality which produces anxiety and is coped with through external cultural buffers (Florian, 1997). Therefore, due to religion's ability to act as a cultural buffer it was hypothesized that:

1. Death anxiety will be significantly related to religious commitment and as religious commitment increases death anxiety will decrease.
2. Within the subtypes of religious commitment, religious behaviors will account for the largest amount of variance with death anxiety.
3. The relationship will remain significant when accounting for personality variables through a partial correlation.
4. The relationship between religious commitment and death anxiety will remain significant when weighted for by denominational expectations.

The third set of hypotheses was to clarify the relationship between religious commitment and moral anxiety. In the literature, there seemed to be a lack of emphasis addressing religiosity and the anxiety that morality may or may not produce. A number of studies have addressed religion's role in the development and adherence to moral behaviors. Scheeper found that religious characteristics outweighed all other personal

characteristics, including education and income level, in regard to developing moral attitudes (1998). Therefore, it was hypothesized:

1. The relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment will be significant and as moral anxiety increased, religious commitment increased.
2. Religious behaviors would account for the most variance in regard to the subtypes of religious commitment, and religious belonging would account for the second variance.
3. The relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment will remain significant when accounting for differences in personality dimensions through a partial correlation.
4. The relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment would remain significant when assessing the cognitive expectations through the groups weighted religious commitment score.

The fourth set of hypotheses addressed in this study was to examine the relationship between meaninglessness anxiety and religious commitment. The relationship between these two variables had not been addressed extensively within previous research, and the findings on this relationship had been contradictory. Some have found minimal or no relationship between religious motivation and existential meaning; whereas, others found that religiousness had been significantly related to a sense of meaning and purpose in life (Maltby, 1997; Fry, 2000). Due to these contradictory findings, it was hypothesized:

1. Meaninglessness anxiety will be significantly related to religious commitment and as religious commitment increases existential anxiety would decrease.

2. Religious commitment, rather than religious belief, will have a significant relationship with meaninglessness anxiety.
3. Within the subtypes of religious commitment, religious behaviors will account for the largest correlation with meaninglessness anxiety
4. The relationship will remain significant when accounting for personality variables through a partial correlation
5. The relationship between religious commitment and meaninglessness anxiety will remain significant when weighted by denominational expectations.

In regard to the subtypes of religious commitment, results from Mockabee's study indicated that Christians demonstrated three core aspects of their religion: prayer, attendance, and scripture reading (2001). Other results from Mockabee's study indicated that the two most frequent aspects of commitment that Christians engaged in were prayer and attendance (2001). Therefore, it was hypothesized:

1. Religious behaviors will have the largest amount of variance with moral, meaninglessness, and death anxiety.
2. Belonging will have the second highest amount of variance with moral, meaningless, and death anxiety.

Based on Tillich's paradigm theory this study hypothesized:

1. Tillich's existential anxiety would be significantly related to religious commitment.
2. Meaninglessness anxiety would account for the largest amount of variance with religious commitment.

Method

Participants

Four hundred and three individuals started the study, but two hundred and sixty-three individuals completed all of the required instruments. Of the two hundred and sixty-three who completed the survey, thirty-five were eliminated from the analysis; thirty-four were eliminated because the scope of the study attempted to measure Christian and Catholic religiosity, and those participants identified with either other spiritual beliefs or no beliefs in a religion or God; and one participant was eliminated because he/she did not consent to the study; two hundred and twenty-eight participants were utilized to examine the results.

Of the two hundred and twenty-eight participants 86% identified themselves as Caucasian, 8.2% identified with as a minority (1.7% African American, 2.6% Hispanic, .4% Asian/Pacific Islander, 2.2% Middle Eastern, 1.3% Native American), 3.9% identified themselves as multiracial, and 1.3% declined to state their race. In regard to their religious beliefs 27% of the participants endorsed being Evangelical Protestant, 12.2% stated they were Pentecostal, 11.8% stated they were Baptist, 13.5% identified being of the Mormon faith, 12.2% identified themselves as Catholic, and 22.7% identified themselves as belonging to a mainline denomination. Participants age ranged from 18 to over 61 years old with 22.7% of the participants identified as being in the 26 to 30 age bracket and 54.1% identified as being younger than 36 (18-20 = 10.9%, 21-25 = 20.5%, 26-30 = 22.7%, 31-35 = 10.9%); slightly more than six and a half percent identified as being in the 36 to 40 age bracket, 5.7% identified as being in the 41 to 45 age bracket, 5.2% stated they were in the 46 to 50 year old bracket, 8.7% endorsed as

being the 51 to 55 year old bracket, 4.8% stated they were in the 56 to 60-year-old bracket, and 3.5% endorsed as being 61-years-old or older.

Design

This study was a correlational study comparing religious commitment to existential anxiety while controlling for personality variables through a partial correlation (see figure 1).

Measures

This study incorporated a number of pre-existing scales and measures that accessed the different psychological constructs. These measures included: Existential Anxiety Questionnaire, Death Anxiety Scale, Existential Anxiety Scale, Moral Anxiety Questionnaire, Mockabee religious commitment equation, and Bipolar Adjective Rating Scale (Weems, 2004; Templar, 1970; Good, 1974; Good, 1976; Mockabee, 2001; Piedmont, 1995).

The Existential Anxiety Questionnaire (EAQ) is a 13-item true/false self-report measured Tillich's conceptualization of existential anxiety. Scores ranged from 0 to 13 with greater scores equaling greater anxiety. Statements that appeared on the EAQ included, "I often feel anxious because I am worried because that life may have no meaning," and "I never think about emptiness." The EAQ demonstrated adequate reliability with an alpha of .76 and a test-retest coefficient of .72.

The Death Anxiety Scale (DAS) is a fifteen item true/false instrument that measured an individual's attitudes toward death related topics (Templar, 1970). Statements for the DAS included, "I am very much afraid to die," and "I am really scared of having a heart attack." Scores for this measure ranged from 0 to 15, higher scores indicated higher levels

of anxiety over death. The reliability coefficients included a test-retest, a Kuder-Richardson reliability coefficient of .76, and construct validity of .74 with the Boyar's Fear of Death Scale.

The Moral Anxiety Questionnaire (MAQ) which is a questionnaire consisting of 34 true/false statements that measured the amount of moral anxiety that an individual experienced. Statements on the MAQ included, "I sometimes worry that I may not be giving enough time to my family," and "I sometimes worry that I may be too selfish or self-centered" (Good, 1976). Scores for this measure ranged from 0 to 34, significant results indicated with scores greater than or equal to 19. The reliability coefficients included an odd-even reliability coefficient of 0.86 and a spilt-half coefficient of 0.92.

The Existential Anxiety Scale (EAS) is a 32-item true/false self-report. The scores ranged from 0 to 32 with greater scores equating to higher existential anxiety (Good, 1974). Examples of this measure included, "I frequently have the feeling that my life has little or no purpose" and "My life seems to be rather aimless?" The EAS demonstrated good validity with an alpha of .89.

Mockabee's religious commitment equation was used to assess overall religious commitment (2001). The equation measured three distinct aspect of religious commitment including ritualistic behaviors (belonging), private devotion (behaviors), and psychological commitment (belief). Items from the Buckeye State Poll Religious Commitment Items and the National Election Study Religious Commitment Items were administered to gather the data for overall commitment as well as the three subtypes: ritualistic behaviors, private devotion, and psychological commitment (1997; 1996). These items were the original items utilized by Mockabee to establish the reliability

coefficients for the Mockabee religious commitment equation (2001). Examples of the items used: how often do you pray outside of religious services, with answers varying from more than once a day to never. Another example included, "how important is it for a person of your religion to read Scripture outside of religious services" with answers varying from very important to not important at all. Each of the items were scaled to provide a score ranging from zero to one, and the overall religious commitment score was obtained by adding the four scores together and dividing by the weighted importance. In addition, the weighted importance was determined by the responses of the individuals on the importance of each activity to their faith in accordance to Mockabee's religious equation. The alpha reliability coefficient was .84.

Bipolar Adjective Rating Scale (BARS) is an inventory assessing five domains of personality: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. The BARS is an eighty item adjective scale with a seven point Likert scale answers ranged from very much like me, like me, somewhat like me, to neutral. Bipolar Adjectives on the BARS included, "Outgoing 1—Very Much Like Me, 2—Like Me, 3—Somewhat Like Me, 4—Neutral, 5—Somewhat Like Me, 6—Like Me, 7—Very Much Like Me—Reserved." Other adjectives in the BARS included insecure verse secure, active verse passive, and dominant verse submissive. Each of the adjectives was scored based on the FFM assessing the participants' level of neuroticism, agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. Reliability coefficients for the BARS included alpha's range from .71 on openness, .80 on neuroticism, .81 on conscientiousness, and a .83 on extraversion and agreeableness.

The scales were formatted into *Survey Monkey's* electronic format in which the exact data from the instruments were duplicated on the site to ensure the reliability and validity of the instruments. Message boards and email were utilized to gather participants who met the criteria for the current study.

Procedures

Prior to the administration of the assessments, all of the surveys were entered into *surveymonkey.com*. *Suveymonkey.com* is a web based research database which allows users to construct surveys based assessments and providing tools to assist the researcher in recruiting and analyzing the results. The questions were entered in the exact format as they were presented in their standardized forms. The location of the study was posted on religious message boards throughout the internet. Additionally, other individuals were recruited through an email detailing the study's purpose and where the study was located. This email was sent to pastors and other church leaders and asked them to forward the email to individuals who were willing to participate. The initial page of the website was a screen that explained the informed consent process and only proceeded if the participant consents to the experiment. Once the participant has consented to the study he/she was allowed to proceed to all aforementioned measures.

All of the measures in this study utilized interval or ratio scales, therefore the data was analyzed using a Pearson's r and a Pearson's R with multiple regression while controlling for the Five Factor dimensions of personality.

Results

Two hundred and twenty-eight participants were obtained from various Christian denominations. The number of participants sufficiently met the criteria for the study's

statistical design. Participants were gathered through a convenience sample in which individuals who were willing to participate in the study were utilized. The inclusionary criteria for the participants included either an association with a religious organization or participation on a religious message board. Additionally, the study was a non-compensatory study.

The first hypothesis of the study examined Paul Tillich's theory of existential anxiety to find if there was a significant relationship between death anxiety and meaninglessness anxiety and moral anxiety. It was hypothesized that death anxiety would be significantly related to meaninglessness anxiety and moral anxiety. A Pearson's r was conducted and results indicated that death anxiety was significantly related to both meaninglessness anxiety, $r\ (228) = .205, p = .002$, and moral anxiety, $r\ (228) = .43, p < .001$, at an alpha level of .05. Additionally, these scales were correlated to the EAQ which was developed based on Paul Tillich's theory; at a .05 significance level results indicated moderate correlations with death anxiety, $r\ (228) = .49, p < .001$, moral anxiety, $r\ (228) = .47, p < .001$, and existential anxiety, $r\ (228) = .53, p < .001$, (see Table 1).

A partial correlation was then conducted to determine if Tillich's theory indicated a more distinct psychological phenomenon. When neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness were controlled for, at an alpha level of .05 death anxiety remained significant with moral anxiety, $r\ (225) = .31, p < .001$, but was no longer significant with meaninglessness anxiety, $r\ (225) = .02, p = .721$. Further analysis of the Five Factor Model, indicated that the relationship between death anxiety and meaninglessness anxiety had a small but significant result at a alpha level of .05 while controlling for extraversion, $r\ (225) = .16, p = .016$, openness, $r\ (225) = .19, p =$

.003, agreeableness, r (225) = .18, p = .005, conscientiousness, r (225) = .158, p = .011, independently; although when neuroticism was controlled for the relationship between death anxiety and meaninglessness anxiety was no longer significant r (225) = .04, p > .56) (see Table 2).

The second set of hypotheses examined the relationship between death anxiety and religious commitment. One hypothesis of the study was that the relationship between death anxiety and religious commitment would be significant and that death anxiety would decrease as religious commitment increased. At an alpha level of .05 a Pearson's r indicated that death anxiety was significantly related to overall commitment, r = -.26, p < .001, and that death anxiety did decrease as religious commitment increased; although the relationship was significant, the results only accounted for 6.66% of the variance (see Table 3).

Next, the study attempted to discover whether different types of religious commitment would account for greater amounts of variance with death anxiety (Mockabee, 2001). Results indicated that belonging, r (228) = -.21, p < .001, and behavior, r (228) = -.28, p < .001, were significantly related to death anxiety at the .05 significance level; although death anxiety was significant the results indicated that religious commitment accounted for a minimal percentage of the variance with belonging accounting for 4.41% and behavior accounting for 7.84% (see Table 3).

When the dimensions of the Five Factor Model of personality were controlled for through a partial correlation results indicated that death anxiety's relationship with overall commitment, r (225) = -.17, p > .01, and behavior, r (225) = -.20, p = .003 remained significant at the .05 alpha level, whereas, death anxiety's relationship with

belonging was no longer significant, r (225) = -.12, p > .06) (see Table 4). Further examination of the Five Factor Model indicated that when religious belonging was controlled for by extraversion, r (225) > -.17, p < .01, openness r (225) > -.19, p = .003, agreeableness, r (225) > -.18, p = .005, and conscientiousness, r (225)> -.18, p = .004, independently, the relationship remained significant at the .05 alpha level but was no longer significant when neuroticism was controlled for, r (225) > .11, p > .09 (see Table 6). Additionally, when religious commitment was weighted by religious expectations both religious belonging, r (228) = -.20, p = .002, and religious behavior, r (228) = -.26, p < .001, remained significant (see Table 3).

The third set of hypotheses for this study focused on the relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment. One hypothesis was that moral anxiety would be significantly related to religious commitment and that moral anxiety would increase with greater levels of religious commitment. A Pearson's r correlation was conducted at a .05 significance level to determine the relationship between religious commitment and moral anxiety; results indicated that moral anxiety was significantly related to overall commitment, r (228) = -.15, p > .02, and indicated that moral anxiety decreased as religious commitment increased. Although the relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment was significant it only accounted for 2.25% of the variance (see Table 3).

The second hypothesis regarding moral anxiety was that religious behavior would be the highest amount of variance to moral anxiety. Religious behavior, r (228) = -.15, p > .02, and belief, r (228) = -.14, p > .03, were significant and accounted for 2.13% and

1.96% of the variance respectively. Moral anxiety's relationship with belonging, r (228) = -.11, $p > 0.09$, was not significant (see Table 3).

It was also hypothesized that the relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment would represent a distinct psychological phenomenon and would remain significant when accounting for dimensions of personality and cognitive expectations. A partial correlation was conducted to understand the Five Factor Model of personality's influence on the relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment. Results indicated at a .05 alpha level that when controlling for neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness moral anxiety's relationship with overall commitment, r (225) = .01, $p > .85$, behavior, r (225) = .00, $p > .99$, and belief, r (225) = -.01, $p > .90$, were no longer significant (see Table 3). Also, and when behavior, r (228) = -.10, $p > .13$, and belief, r (228) = -.11, $p > .10$, were weighted by religious importance no significant relationships were found (see Table 3).

The fourth set of hypotheses examined the relationship between meaninglessness anxiety and religious commitment. It was hypothesized that religious commitment would be significantly related to meaninglessness anxiety and as commitment increased meaninglessness anxiety would decrease. Results indicated that at the .05 alpha level meaninglessness anxiety was significantly related to religious commitment, r (228) = -.49, $p < .001$, and that as religious commitment increased meaninglessness anxiety decreased (see Table 3).

It was also hypothesized that behavior would account for the largest amount of variance among the subtypes of commitment. Results indicated that at the .05 alpha level belonging, r (228) = -.45, $p < .001$, behavior, r (228) = -.44, $p < .001$, and belief, r (228)

= -.37, $p < .001$, all were significantly related to meaninglessness anxiety and that behavior accounted for the largest amount of variance within the subtypes of religious commitment (see Table 3).

Additionally, belonging, r (225) = -.34, $p < .001$, behavior, r (225) = -.32, $p < .001$, belief, r (225) = -.28, $p < .001$, and religious commitment, r (225) = -.37, $p < .001$, all remained significant at the .05 alpha level when controlling for personality variables and when weighted by religious importance: belonging, r (228) = -.43, $p < .001$, behavior, r (228) = -.42, $p < .001$, and belief, r (228) = -.36, $p < .001$ (see Table 3).

The fifth set of hypotheses was that religious behaviors would have the largest amount of variance to moral anxiety, existential, and death anxiety. A series of Pearson's R backward multiple regressions to determine which commitment variables would be associated with death, moral, and existential anxiety. At a .05 significance level religious behaviors, belonging, and belief, F (3, 224) > 7.34, $p < .001$, where significantly predictive of difference in death anxiety and accounted for 9% of the variance. With a tolerance of .5 both religious belonging and religious belief were both removed from the regression model leaving religious behavior as the solitary predictor with death anxiety, F (1, 226) > 19.16, $p < .001$, which accounted for 7.8% of the variance with death anxiety.

A Pearson's R backward multiple regression was conducted to determine the commitment factors that accounted for the differences in moral anxiety; results indicated that only religious behaviors and moral anxiety were significantly related at an alpha level of .05, F (1, 226) > 4.91, $p = .028$. Religious behaviors only accounted for 2.1% of the variance with moral anxiety.

A third Pearson's R backward multiple regression was conducted to determine which religious commitment factors were predictive of differences in meaninglessness anxiety. Results indicated that at an alpha level of .05, behavior, belonging, and belief significantly accounted for 23.9% of the variance, $F(3, 224) > 23.43, p < .001$. At a tolerance level of .5 religious belief was removed from the regression equation indicating that behavior and belonging were both significant factors when assessing differences in meaninglessness anxiety. Belonging (8.24%) accounted for the largest amount of variance with meaninglessness anxiety, followed by religious behaviors (5.71%).

Results indicated that religious behavior accounted for the most variance in moral (2.13%) and death anxieties (7.84%); whereas, religious belonging (8.24%) rather than behavior (5.71%) accounted for the largest amount of variance with meaninglessness anxiety. It was also hypothesized that religious belonging would account for the second highest amount of variance with death anxiety, moral anxiety, and meaninglessness anxiety. Results suggested that belonging was not a significant factor when examining death anxiety and moral anxiety. In regard to meaninglessness anxiety, belonging accounted for the largest variance followed by religious behaviors.

The final set of hypotheses was that Tillich's existential anxiety would significantly relate to religious commitment and that meaninglessness anxiety would account for the largest amount of variance between existential anxiety and religious commitment. A Pearson's R step-wise multiple regression was conducted to determine the factors that accounted for the difference in religious commitment; results suggested that Tillich's existential anxiety accounted for 26.5% of the variance with religious commitment; the Pearson's R step-wise regression also indicated that the best set of

predictors to determine the differences in religious commitment were death anxiety and meaninglessness anxiety which accounted for 26.2% of the variance in religious commitment scores $F(2, 225) = 39.99$, $p < .001$. Meaninglessness anxiety accounted for the largest amount of variance (20.43%) between existential anxiety and religious commitment (see Table 8).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the complex nature of existential anxiety and religiosity to determine if religiosity alleviates or perpetuates a type of anxiety. The researcher wanted to determine if existential anxiety is a distinct psychological phenomenon or an expression of personality.

The first set of hypotheses of the study was to determine if Paul Tillich's theory of existential anxiety could be demonstrated and that Tillich's theory would be a distinct psychological phenomenon rather than an expression of personality. Meaninglessness and moral anxieties were theorized to be mediating factors through which individuals would express their death anxiety. This study appeared to confirm a moderate relationship between death anxiety and moral anxiety indicating that morality and death are related constructs. When assessing the relationship between death anxiety and meaninglessness anxiety only a minimal amount of variance between the two was accounted for; this appeared to indicate that there is a significant but subtle relationship between meaninglessness and death anxiety. The minimal amount of variance maybe due to the poor construction the EAS; in this study a floor effect appeared to occur with the majority of participants scoring a five or lower. The minimal amount of variance may also be due

to other mediating factors including some affects with personality and other variables that were beyond the scope of this study.

Next, the study attempted to determine the relationship between death, moral, and meaninglessness anxieties and Tillich's theory of existential anxiety. Results indicated that Tillich's existential anxiety appeared to moderately correlate with death anxiety, moral anxiety, and meaninglessness anxiety. These results appeared consistent with Tillich's theory in which individuals may express their ultimate fear of nonbeing through various modalities. Some theorists have argued that these constructs measure fundamentally different phenomenon; although if a more substantial correlation was found between Tillich's existential anxiety and moral, meaninglessness, and death anxieties would have been found then it might indicate a unitary, simplistic phenomenon that would contradict Tillich's theory.

Personality variables were also controlled for to determine if personality affected how an individual may express his/her existential anxiety. Results indicated that the relationship between moral anxiety and death anxiety did not appear to be affected by personality, whereas; death anxiety's relationship with meaninglessness anxiety appeared to be directly related to an individual's sense of neuroticism. Analysis of the EAS appeared to support these findings as the questions for the scale reflected an aimless, purposeless life that is often associated with depression, and according to the Five Factor Model, higher levels of depression are associated with higher levels of neuroticism.

A second set of hypotheses of this study was to ascertain the relationship between death anxiety and religious commitment. Research on death anxiety indicated contradicting results. Many studies have failed to support the hypothesis of a

unidimensional relationship between religiosity and death anxiety (Hoelter, 1979). Some studies on death anxiety have not been significant while other studies found positive correlations between a derived subtype of death anxiety and religiosity (Kraft et al, 2001, Hoelter, 1979). Additionally, terror management theory has indicated that death anxiety is coped with through external cultural buffers such as religion. (Florian, 1979).

One hypothesis of the study was that the relationship between death anxiety and religious commitment would be significant and that death anxiety would decrease as religious commitment increased. Results indicated that as religious commitment increased, death anxiety decreased indicating that religiosity appeared to act as a buffer for death anxiety although it appeared to have a limited affect. The minimal affect of religious commitment on death anxiety maybe due to multiple cultural buffers that exist today. Some individuals may express their existential anxiety in different ways indicating that there maybe a subgroup that focuses their existential anxiety on their inevitable nonbeing.

This study attempted to determine if there was a certain type of religious commitment that perpetuated or alleviated an individual's death anxiety. Due to a small amount of variance with religious salience and Mockabee's assertion that private devotional behaviors were the fundamental component of religious commitment, it was hypothesized that religious behaviors would account for the largest percent of variance within death anxiety. Results indicated that both religious behavior and belonging were significantly associated with death anxiety, and religious belonging accounted for a slightly higher variance with death anxiety than religious belonging. Therefore, it could be suggested that individuals may attempt to cope with their death anxieties through a

variety of modalities many of which may not have been accounted for within this study. These results might infer that relationships maybe the fundamental aspect of coping with death anxiety; religious individuals may cope with their death anxiety either through attempting to connect with other individuals and giving them a sense of belonging, or connecting with God through religious devotional rituals to gain a sense of purpose.

The relationship between death anxiety and religious commitment was assessed through controlling for dimensions of personality to determine if differences between death anxiety and religious commitment could be better explained by differences in domains of personality. When neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness were controlled for through a partial correlation the relationship between death anxiety and religious commitment and religious behaviors was still significant, but the relationship between religious belonging and death anxiety was no longer significant. Further analysis of the Five Factor Model indicated that when extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness were controlled for individually, the relationship between religious belonging and death anxiety remained significant; but when neuroticism was controlled for the relationship was no longer significant. This may indicate that neurotic individuals may benefit from greater belonging with others of their faith as it pertains to their death anxiety.

The third set of hypotheses for this study examined the relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment. In the previous research moral anxiety and the role of religious involvement in moral development appeared to have been neglected (Walker 2003). Scheeper's study concluded that religious factors were significantly influential to the development of moral attitudes (1998); and Florian and Mikulincer

concluded that the judgment of a transgression appeared to be directly related to the meaning an individual has to his own mortality (1997).

A hypothesis of this study was that moral anxiety would be significantly related to religious commitment and that moral anxiety would increase with greater levels of religious commitment. The results indicated a significant but small correlation between moral anxiety and religious commitment. Results indicated that as religious commitment increased that moral anxiety decreased. The negative relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment appeared contradictory to the previous research and theory, although these results may indicate that morality maybe mediated by another variable; it may also be that as religious commitment increased so would the individual's adherence to the moral principles of their belief system; indicating that adherence to their beliefs would act as a buffer to their moral anxiety. This also appeared to be confirmed when examining the correlations between the subtypes of religious commitment and moral anxiety.

Next, the study attempted to determine if there was a type of religious commitment that might act as a conduit to alleviate or perpetuate moral anxiety. Religious belief and religious behaviors both indicated small but significant results with moral anxiety but both were no longer significant when controlled for personality variables and when weighted by religious importance.

Additionally, the relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment was hypothesized to be significant when the domains of the Five Factor Model of personality were controlled for through a partial correlation. Results contradicted the hypothesis, when personality dimensions were accounted for the relationship between

moral anxiety and religious commitment was no longer significant. Upon further examination of the Five Factor Model, only openness did not significantly affect the relationship between moral anxiety and overall religious commitment, religious behavior, and religious belief. This appeared to indicate that personality may occupy a mediating role between religious commitment and moral anxiety in which a multiplicity of factors may influence the rigidity of moral standards that an individual may adhere too.

Religious belief and religious behaviors both indicated small but significant results with moral anxiety but both were no longer significant when weighted by religious importance. The change in significance appeared to indicate that increased involvement with an individual's faith was a not as a significant factor when their cognitive expectations were accounted for. This may indicate that the group's influence and expectation on the individual has a more prominent affect when attempting to cope with moral anxiety. Individuals may attempt to cope with their moral anxiety through attempting to belong with their faith group and adhere to the group's expectations.

One interesting result of the study was a minimal relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment. Personality may be a fundamental contributor on whether an individual expresses his/her existential anxiety through his/her moral standards. It may also be that may individuals are brought up to adhere to a high moral standard and no longer associate with their religious upbringing. Another possibility is that no relationship exists between moral anxiety and religious commitment. However, an absence of a relationship between moral anxiety and religious commitment would appear to be contradictory from previous research and theory which stated that moral development is a fundamental aspect of religious involvement (Scheeper, 1998).

The study also attempted to examine the relationship between meaninglessness anxiety and religious commitment. The research and theory between religiosity and meaninglessness anxiety has produced conflicting results. Thorne believed that existential anxieties are produced by either perceived or actual failures to self actualize (1963), whereas Fry found that personal meaning was a predictor for an individual's well being (2000).

The first hypothesis in addressing the relationship between meaninglessness anxiety and religious commitment was to assess if there was a relationship between meaninglessness anxiety and religious commitment and how those variables may interact with one another. Results confirmed the researcher's hypothesis that as religious commitment increased meaninglessness anxiety decreased. The relationship between meaninglessness anxiety and religious commitment appeared to indicate that increased compliance with one's belief system can provide a greater sense of meaning and purpose in life. These findings may indicate that a person who chooses to rebel against their values related to religion may experience a sense of purposelessness and meaninglessness that might culminate in a depressive episode (Berman 2006). Also, this may indicate individuals who are not actively involved with their religious standards and beliefs may benefit from reengaging in those beliefs.

The second hypothesis examined the subtypes of religious commitment with meaninglessness anxiety. Interestingly, results were contrary with the hypothesis; it was expected that religious behaviors would account for the most variance between subtypes of religious commitment and meaninglessness anxiety, but the results indicated that religious belonging accounted for the largest amount of variance with meaninglessness

anxiety. This may indicate that a sense of belonging and connection is a key component for finding meaning and purpose in a religious life.

The relationship between meaninglessness anxiety and religious commitment was assessed to determine whether the results were more indicative of an expression of personality dimensions or whether they indicated a more distinct psychological phenomenon. When controlled for the FFM domains of personality through a partial correlation both overall religious commitment and the subtypes of religious commitment all remained significant and indicated that the relationship between meaninglessness anxiety and religious commitment was not an expression of personality. Also, when the relationship between meaninglessness anxiety and religious commitment was assessed to determine if cognitive expectations of a belief system influenced an individual's meaninglessness anxiety, results indicated that that there was not a significant difference between the two when accounting for the group's cognitive expectations.

A fifth set of hypotheses was that religious behaviors would have the largest correlation to moral, meaninglessness, and death anxiety and that religious belonging would have the second highest correlation. Previous research concluded that religious behaviors and involvement were factors that contributed to happiness in the United States (Ferriss 2002) and that religion was demonstrated to be an adaptive coping mechanism for stress and anxiety (Wong-McDonald, 2000, Park 1990, Fabricatore 2004). Additionally, Mockabee's study indicated that the two most frequent aspects of commitment that mainline Protestants engaged in were prayer and attendance (2001).

It was hypothesized that religious behaviors would have the largest correlation to moral, death, and meaninglessness anxiety. Results indicated that religious behaviors

accounted for the most variance in moral and death anxiety; although, religious behaviors were only the second highest variance with meaninglessness anxiety. This may indicate that individuals undertake a multifaceted coping style to deal with the inevitability of death in which behavioral adherence to their belief system and a sense of connection with others helps individuals cope with their inevitable demise. Also, it may indicate that connecting with others is an important aspect of developing purpose and meaning in one's religious life.

Results also indicated that religious behaviors and belonging accounted for the largest amount of variance with moral, meaninglessness, and death anxiety. Intriguingly, religious belief or salience, which has been the common methodology for measuring various religious phenomenon, accounted for the least amount of variance with death and meaningless anxiety.

The results were relatively small but religious behaviors did account for the largest percentage of variance between death anxiety and the subtypes of religious commitment. These results indicated that religion appears to buffer an individual's death anxiety through their adherence/compliance to their beliefs. Religious belief or salience was not a significant factor related to death anxiety; indicating that the active behaviors of one's faith may activate a coping response to death anxiety rather than a simple cognitive belief or guidance. Therefore, death anxiety might be alleviated through attempting to please God (behavior). When examining meaningless anxiety it appeared that complying with the devotional behaviors of one's belief system and being actively involved with one's faith are copying mechanism that helped religious individuals cope

with their meaninglessness anxiety; whereas, devotional behaviors appeared to be positive coping aspect that religion may provide in relation to moral anxiety.

The final set of hypotheses was that Tillich's existential anxiety would be significantly related to religious commitment and that meaninglessness anxiety would account for the most variance with overall commitment. Results indicated that Tillich's theory of existential anxiety accounted for 26.5% of variance with religious commitment indicating that there are multiple factors that influence an individual's religious commitment but that existential anxiety is a contributing factor. Death anxiety and meaninglessness anxiety also appeared to the most influential factors affecting religious commitment indicating that religious commitment appears to be effecting in coping with death and meaninglessness anxieties. Additionally, meaninglessness anxiety accounted for the largest amount of variance between religious commitment and existential anxiety, indicating that Tillich may have been partially correct in his assertion that the main sphere in which individual's experience existential anxiety encompasses a need to have meaning and purpose. Although it appeared that there may be an additional factor involved in expressing an individual's existential anxieties; results appeared to indicate that personality did have some influence in an individual's expression of existential anxiety and therefore maybe worthwhile to explore how a more complex personality evaluation such as the MMPI-2 might indicate about an individual's expression of existential anxiety.

The best model fit to explain the variance between religious commitments included a combination of meaninglessness anxiety and death anxiety which accounted for 26.2% of the variance; moral anxiety did not appear to have a meaningful impact on

religious commitment. This maybe due to the culture which Tillich suggested had shifted from a need to live a righteous, judgment-free life to a culture which has personified the need have purpose; another explanation might be that religious affiliation is only associated with a minimal moral standard and not necessarily expecting a higher standard of living from its leaders. Moral anxiety's minimal amount of variability appears to coincide with the idea that all Christians are held to live to the same moral standard and therefore moral anxiety might be more of a stable trait and may not be affected with differing levels of commitment.

The nature and scope of this research was limited on a variety of levels. First, the research utilized only individuals who were associated with email or the internet web pages and who were willing to respond. Therefore, it could be plausible that certain groups may have been under represented in the study. Also, the scope of the study focused on individuals who were of a Christian faith and who were associated with religious messages boards and/or religious email networks. These participants may have overrepresented the high commitment religious followers. Additionally, the belief scale was underdeveloped and based the belief component of religious commitment on one question which may have not effectively examined the amount of guidance that religion might provide. Additionally, the EAS appeared to have a floor effect in which the majority of the participants indicate scores of five or lower.

Further research would include exploring different religions and assessing how other faiths may cope with existential anxiety. Additionally, examining normative population samples may add to the research by comparing the normative population to the religiously committed. Also, utilizing a more developed scale for salience scale would

beneficial in confirming the differences between belonging, behavior, and belief. Utilizing a more complex personality assessment, such as the MMPI, may be beneficial in determining if different personality types express their existential anxieties in different ways. Also, developing experimental techniques to determine what may cause an individual's existential anxiety to increase would be helpful as well. Developing a comprehensive validate assessment for Tillich's existential anxiety would also aid future research as well.

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Table 1.

Death, Moral, Meaninglessness, and Tillich's Existential Anxieties

	Death Anxiety (DAS)	Moral Anxiety (MAQ)	Meaninglessness Anxiety (EAS)	Tillich Theory (EAQ)
Death Anxiety (DAS)	1	--	--	--
DAS Controlled for Personality	1	--	--	--
Moral Anxiety (MAQ)	.426***	1	--	--
MAQ Controlled for Personality	.306***	1	--	--
Meaninglessness Anxiety (EAS)	.205**	.271***	1	--
EAS controlled for Personality	NS	NS	1	--
Tillich Existential Anxiety (EAQ)	.491***	.469***	.534***	1
EAQ Controlled for by Personality	.402***	.348***	.413***	1

*** Correlation is significant at the .001 level (two-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)
NS Not Significant

Table 2.

Death, Moral, Meaninglessness Anxiety while controlling for Personality Dimensions

	Meaninglessness Anxiety	Moral Anxiety
Death Anxiety	-.205**	.426***
Death Anxiety Controlled for Personality	NS	.306***
Death Anxiety Controlled for by Neuroticism	NS	.318***
Death Anxiety Controlled for by Extraversion	-.159*	.415***
Death Anxiety Controlled for by Openness	-.194**	.423***
Death Anxiety Controlled for by Agreeableness	-.184**	.416***
Death Anxiety Controlled for by Conscientiousness	-.168*	.401***

*** Correlation is significant at the .001 level (two-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)
NS Not Significant

Table 3.

Religious Commitment and Death, Moral, and Meaninglessness Anxieties

	Death Anxiety	Moral Anxiety	Meaninglessness Anxiety
Overall Commitment	-.258***	-.147*	-.486***
Commitment Controlled for Personality	-.165*	NS	-.368***
Behavior	-.280***	-.146*	-.435***
Behavior Controlled for by Personality	-.195**	NS	-.320***
Behavior Weighted by Religion	-.262***	NS	-.419***
Belonging	-.211**	NS	-.450***
Belonging Controlled for by Personality	NS	NS	-.339***
Belonging Weighted by Religion	-.201**	NS	-.443***
Belief	NS	-.140*	-.370***
Belief Controlled for Personality	NS	NS	-.284***
Belief Weighted by Religion	NS	NS	-.355***

*** Correlation is significant at the .001 level (two-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)
NS Not Significant

Table 4.

Religious Commitment and Death, Moral, and Meaninglessness Anxieties while controlling for Personality

	Death Anxiety	Moral Anxiety	Meaninglessness Anxiety
Overall Commitment	-.258***	-.147*	-.486***
Commitment Controlled for Personality	-.165*	NS	-.368***
Commitment Controlled for by Neuroticism	-.150*	NS	-.375***
Commitment Controlled for by Extraversion	-.231***	NS	-.440***
Commitment Controlled for by Openness	-.258***	-146*	-.486***
Commitment Controlled for by Agreeableness	-.240***	NS	-.452***
Commitment Controlled for by Conscientiousness	-.239***	NS	-.471***

*** Correlation is significant at the .001 level (two-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)
NS Not Significant

Table 5.

Religious Behaviors and Death, Moral, and Meaninglessness Anxieties while controlling for Personality Dimensions

	Death Anxiety	Moral Anxiety	Meaninglessness Anxiety
Overall Behavior	-.280***	-.146*	-.435***
Behavior Controlled for Personality	-.195**	NS	-.320***
Behavior Controlled for by Neuroticism	-.184**	NS	-.326***
Behavior Controlled for by Extraversion	-.257***	NS	-.396***
Behavior Controlled for by Openness	-.279***	-.145*	-.435***
Behavior Controlled for by Agreeableness	-.265***	NS	-.407***
Behavior Controlled for by Conscientiousness	-.268***	NS	-.426***

*** Correlation is significant at the .001 level (two-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)
NS Not Significant

Table 6.

Religious Belonging and Death, Moral, and Meaninglessness Anxieties while controlling for Personality dimensions

	Death Anxiety	Moral Anxiety	Meaninglessness Anxiety
Overall Belonging	-.211***	NS	-.450***
Belonging Controlled for Personality	NS	NS	-.339***
Belonging Controlled for by Neuroticism	NS	NS	-.354***
Belonging Controlled for by Extraversion	-.182**	NS	-.399***
Belonging Controlled for by Openness	-.209**	NS	-.449***
Belonging Controlled for by Agreeableness	-.193**	NS	-.420***
Belonging Controlled for by Conscientiousness	-.194**	NS	-.438***

*** Correlation is significant at the .001 level (two-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)
NS Not Significant

Table 7.

Religious Belief and Death, Moral, and Meaninglessness Anxieties while controlling for Personality Dimensions

	Death Anxiety	Moral Anxiety	Meaninglessness Anxiety
Overall Belief	NS	-.140*	-.370***
Belief Controlled for Personality	NS	NS	-.284***
Belief Controlled for by Neuroticism	NS	NS	-.260***
Belief Controlled for by Extraversion	NS	NS	-.336***
Belief Controlled for by Openness	NS	-.142*	-.375***
Belief Controlled for by Agreeableness	NS	NS	-.316***
Belief Controlled for by Conscientiousness	NS	NS	-.334***

*** Correlation is significant at the .001 level (two-tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed)
NS Not Significant

Table 8.

Summary of Multiple Regression Backward Analysis for Religious Commitment Variables Predicting Differences in Death Anxiety (N = 228)

Variable	β	SE β	β
Religious Behaviors	-3.293	0.752	-0.28**

Note. $R^2 = 0.078$

*p < .01
**p < .001

Model	Adjusted R^2	Predictor	Standardized Beta
1	0.077	Behavior Belonging Belief	-0.52 -0.344** -0.144
2	0.080	Behavior Belief	-0.375** -0.138
3	.074	Behavior	-0.280**

*p < 0.01
**p < 0.001

Table 9.

Summary of Multiple Regression Backward Analysis for Variable Predicting Differences in Moral Anxiety (N = 228)

Variable	β	SE β	β
Behaviors	-4.762	2.148	-0.146*

Note. $R^2 = 0.021$

*p < .05

Model	Adjusted R^2	Predictor	Standardized Beta
1	0.011	Behavior Belonging Belief	-0.087 -0.011 -0.074
2	0.016	Behavior Belief	-0.094 -0.075
3	0.017	Behavior	-0.146*

*p < 0.05

Table 10.

Summary of Multiple Regression Backward Analysis for Variable Predicting Differences in Meaninglessness Anxiety (N = 228)

Variable	β	SE β	β
Behavior	-6.148	2.053	-0.239**
Belonging	-5.379	1.498	-0.287*

Note. $R^2 = 0.233$

*p < .01
**p < .001

Model	Adjusted R^2	Predictor	Standardized Beta
1	0.229	Behavior Belonging Belief	-0.174 -0.277** -0.105
2	0.256	Behavior Belonging	-0.239* -0.287**

*p < 0.01
**p < 0.001

Table 11.

Summary of Multiple Regression Stepwise Analysis for Variable Predicting Differences in Religious Commitment Behaviors (N = 228)

Variable	β	SE β	β
Meaninglessness	-0.52	0.07	-0.45**
Death	-0.42	0.15	-0.17*

Note. $R^2 = 0.262$

*p < .01
**p < .001

Model	Adjusted R^2	Predictor	Standardized Beta
1	0.233	Meaninglessness	-0.486**
2	0.256	Meaninglessness Death	-0.452** -0.166*

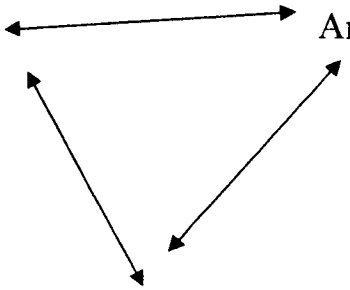
*p < 0.01
*p < 0.001

Figure 1.

Religious Commitment, Existential Anxiety, and Personality Model.

Religious Commitment X_1

Private Devotion (Behaviors) ($X_{1.1}$)
Ritualistic Behaviors (Belonging) ($X_{1.2}$)
Psychological Commitment (Belief) ($X_{1.3}$)



Anxiety Y_1

Moral Anxiety $Y_{1.1}$
Existential Anxiety $Y_{1.2}$
Death Anxiety $Y_{1.3}$

Personality Variables Z

Neuroticism ($Z_{1.1}$)
Openness ($Z_{1.2}$)
Agreeableness ($Z_{1.3}$)
Conscientiousness ($Z_{1.4}$)
Extroversion ($Z_{1.5}$)

Figure 2.

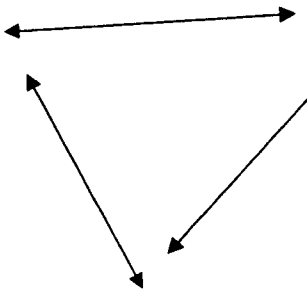
Religious Commitment, Death Anxiety, and Personality Model

Religious Commitment -.258*** (-.165*)

Private Devotion (Behaviors) -.280*** (-.195**)

Ritualistic Behaviors (Belonging) -.211*** (-.123)

Psychological Commitment (Belief) -.121 (-.038)



Death Anxiety Y

N .347***

E -.153*

O -.137*

A -.111

C -.189**

Overall commitment

N -.367***, E .237***, O .021, A .246*** C .139*

Behaviors

N -.338***, E .200**, O .021, A .192**, C .096

Belonging

N -.318***, E .239***, O .033, A .212***, C .116

Belief

N -.312***, E .167*, O -.026, A .318***, C .227***

Personality Variables Z

Neuroticism (N)

Extroversion (E)

Openness (O)

Agreeableness (A)

Conscientiousness (C)

Correlation (correlation after control)

*p ≤ .05

**p ≤ .01

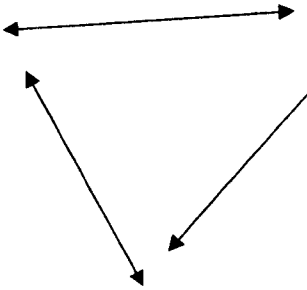
***p ≤ .001

Figure 3.

Religious Commitment, Moral Anxiety, and Personality Model

Religious Commitment -.147* (.012)

Private Devotion (Behaviors) -.146* (.000)
Ritualistic Behaviors (Belonging) -.109 (.030)
Psychological Commitment (Belief) -.140* (-.008)



Moral Anxiety Y

N .446***
E -.129
O -.560
A -.159*
C -.229***

Overall commitment

N -.367***, E .237***, O .021, A .246*** C .139*

Behaviors

N -.338***, E .200**, O .021, A .192**, C .096

Belonging

N -.318***, E .239***, O .033, A .212***, C .116

Belief

N -.312***, E .167*, O -.026, A .318***, C .227***

Personality Variables Z

Neuroticism (N)
Extroversion (E)
Openness (O)
Agreeableness (A)
Conscientiousness (C)

Correlation (correlation after control)
*p ≤ .05
**p ≤ .01
***p ≤ .001

Figure 4.

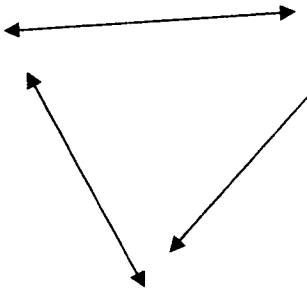
Religious Commitment, Meaninglessness Anxiety, and Personality Model

Religious Commitment -.486*** (-.386***)

Private Devotion (Behaviors) -.435*** (-.320***)

Ritualistic Behaviors (Belonging) -.450*** (-.339***)

Psychological Commitment (Belief) -.370*** (-.284***)



Meaninglessness Anxiety Y

N .501***

E -.390***

O -.104

A -.251***

C -.235***

Overall commitment

N -.367***, E .237***, O .021, A .246*** C .139*

Behaviors

N -.338***, E .200**, O .021, A .192**, C .096

Belonging

N -.318***, E .239***, O .033, A .212***, C .116

Belief

N -.312***, E .167*, O -.026, A .318***, C .227***

Personality Variables Z

Neuroticism (N)

Extroversion (E)

Openness (O)

Agreeableness (A)

Conscientiousness (C)

Correlation (correlation after control)

*$p \leq .05$

**$p \leq .01$

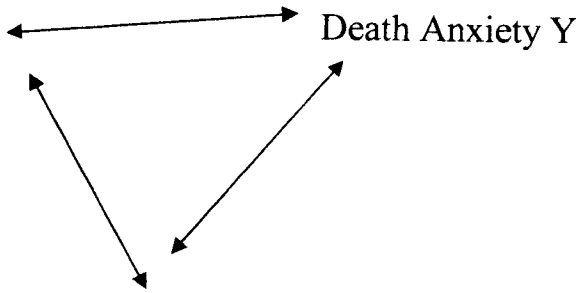
***$p \leq .001$

Figure 5.

Religious Commitment, Death Anxiety, and Denominational Expectations

Religious Commitment -.258***

Private Devotion (Behaviors) -.280*** (-.262***)
Ritualistic Behaviors (Belonging) -.211*** (.201**)
Psychological Commitment (Belief) -.121 (-.116)



Denominational Expectations Z

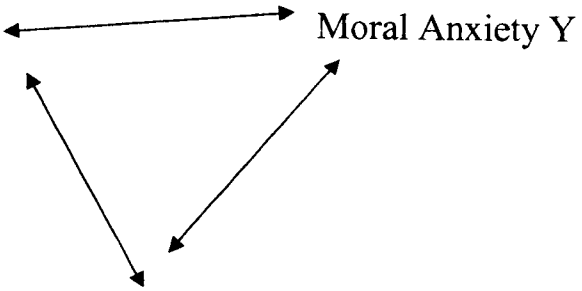
Correlation (correlation after control)
*p ≤ .05
**p ≤ .01
***p ≤ .001

Figure 6.

Religious Commitment, Moral Anxiety, and Denominational Expectations

Religious Commitment -.147*

Private Devotion (Behaviors) -.146* (-.107)
Ritualistic Behaviors (Belonging) -.109 (-.070)
Psychological Commitment (Belief) -.140* (-.100)



Denominational Expectations Z

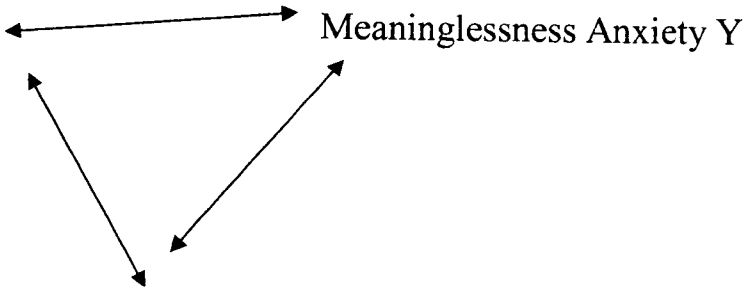
Correlation (correlation after control)
*p ≤ .05
**p ≤ .01
***p ≤ .001

Figure 7.

Religious Commitment, Meaninglessness Anxiety, and Denominational Expectations

Religious Commitment -.486***

Private Devotion (Behaviors) -.435*** (-.419***)
Ritualistic Behaviors (Belonging) -.450*** (-.433***)
Psychological Commitment (Belief) -.370*** (-.355***)



Denominational Expectations Z

Correlation (correlation after control)
*p ≤ .05
**p ≤ .01
***p ≤ .001

Appendix A

Informed Consent

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Religious Commitment and Existential Anxiety

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Daniel Pelak and Dr. Joseph Williams, from the department of Psychology at Eastern Illinois University.
Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether or not to participate

OPTIONAL: You have been asked to participate in this study because of the nature and the scope of the study. The study is focusing on individuals with a Protestant Christianity and Catholic belief system, who have varying levels of commitment to their religion.

* PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

For years many pastors have referenced the "conviction of the Spirit." This study is attempting to examine various religious convictions and to examine the relationship between religious commitment and those convictions. Additionally, this study is attempting to identify the relationship between religion and various external anxieties to distinguish if there are certain anxieties that religion may alleviate or perpetuate.

* PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

Consent to the study; consenting to the study states that you willing agree to participate in the study. To maintain confidentiality no names or signatures will be needed, therefore, consent will be attained by accepting to consent button at the bottom of this screen.

After you consent to the study you will then be asked to answer some questions. Please answer all of the questions by clicking on the appropriate response. Also, in order for each profile to be valid all the questions must be answered. This portion may take approximately thirty minutes. Thank you for your time and honesty.

* POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

To the experimenter's knowledge this study will have no to minimal risk, although it may be possible that some anxiety maybe provoked within the participants. Studies similar to this study have been conducted numerous times across the United States and the experimenter knows of no traumatic experiences that have occurred.

The experimenter is currently working on his Master's degree from Eastern Illinois University. The completion of his degree is contingent on the completion of his thesis, therefore, any action of removal from the program either on the part of the department or the individual may result in the termination of the study.

Again the study is attempting to identify relationship between concepts that have been associated with religion and the religious experience. Although the experimenter can not provide counseling it is recommended that if you do experience distress/discomfort from this study we suggest that you seek counseling from a pastor/counselor.

* POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Religion has been an aspect of society that has largely been criticized and ignored for a number of years by psychology. This study is attempting to expand on the nature and adaptive functioning of the Protestant religious experience. Though no personal benefit can be expected your participation will aid both the religious, scientific, and clinical community in understanding the needs and benefits of the Protestant community.

* CONFIDENTIALITY

In order to ensure confidentiality no identifying information will be asked except for the site to which the individual is associated with. Additionally the data that is collected with be stored on a disk which will then later be stored in a cabinet in Dr. Williams's office to ensure that only authorized individuals are allowed to access the data. Authorized individual will also be limited to the current researchers for this study.

* PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this research study is voluntary and not a requirement or a condition for being the recipient of benefits or services from Eastern Illinois University or any other organization sponsoring the research project. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits or services to which you are otherwise entitled.
You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. There is no penalty if you withdraw from the study and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so. The experimenter is currently working on his Master's degree from Eastern Illinois University. The completion of his degree is contingent on the completion of his thesis, therefore, any action of removal from the program either on the part of the department or the individual may result in the termination of the study.

* IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact the principal investigator, Daniel Pelak (217) 415-1242 eternalparadox9669@yahoo.com 628 Woodlawn Ave Mattoon IL, 61938, or the Research Sponsor/Thesis Chair Dr. Joseph Williams at 217-581-2422, jgwilliams@eiu.edu or 4065 Physical Science Building.

* RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

If you have any questions or concerns about the treatment of human participants in this study, you may call or write:

Institutional Review Board
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Telephone: (217) 581-8576
E-mail: eiuirb@www.eiu.edu

You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay

members of the community not connected with EIU. The IRB has reviewed and approved this study.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time. I have been given the opportunity to print this form and acknowledge that accepting to continue is an act of my consent. If at any time I know no longer wish to participate I acknowledge that I can close my browser, thereby withdrawing my participation.

[redacted]

[redacted] Edit Logic

*** 1. I consent to participate in this study.**

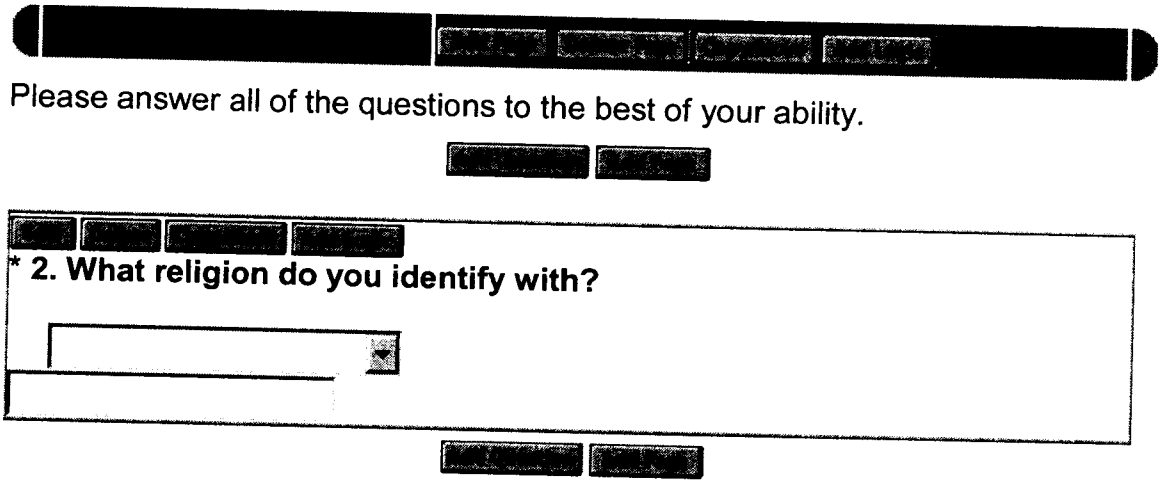
- I consent.
- I do not consent.

[redacted]

Appendix B

Demographic Survey

The following appendix includes a sample of what the question would have looked like on the website followed by a complete list of demographic questions asked following Mockabee's religious commitment format.

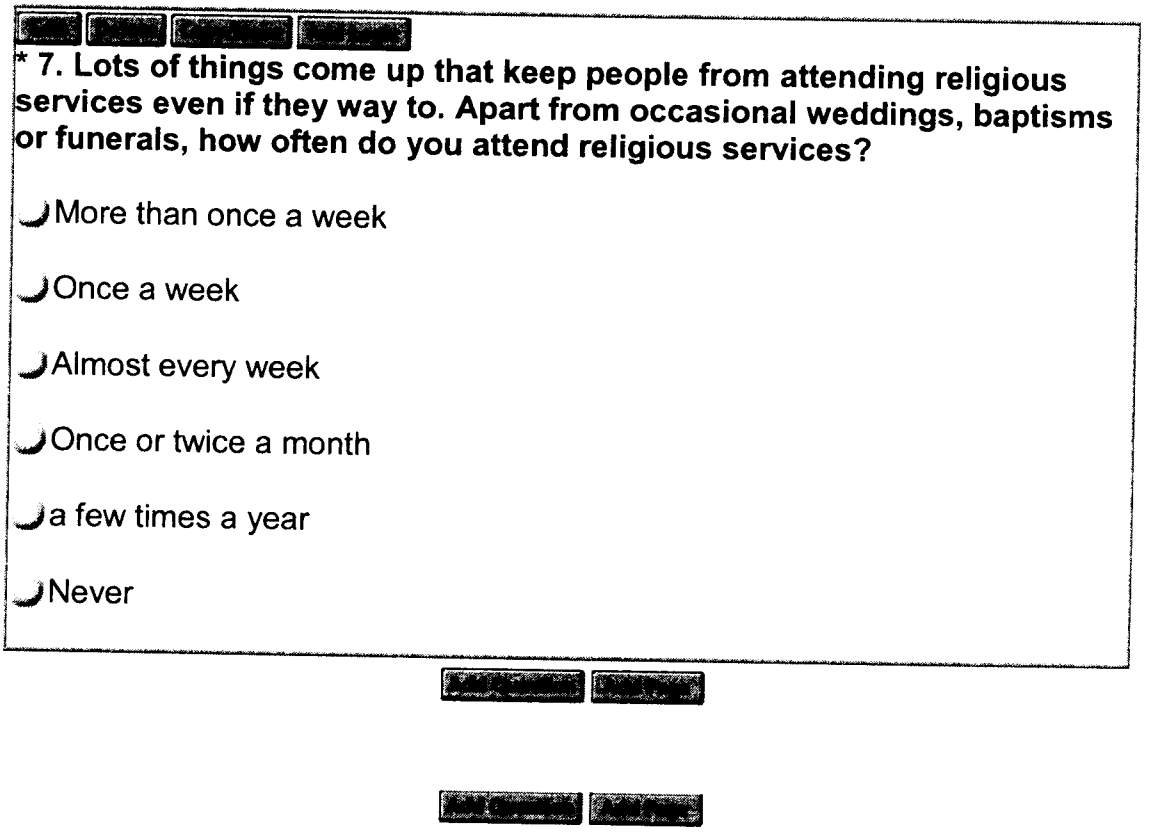


1. I consent to participate in this study.
2. What religion do you identify with?
3. Are you an EIU student?
4. In order to receive credit you will need to enter your EIU authorization code. If you are not participating in this study for credit please type 'none' in the box.
5. What is your age?
6. What is your ethnic background?

Appendix C

Mockabee's Religious Commitment Questions

The following appendix includes a sample of what the question would have looked like on the website followed by a complete list of religious commitment questions asked following Mockabee's format.



*** 7. Lots of things come up that keep people from attending religious services even if they way to. Apart from occasional weddings, baptisms or funerals, how often do you attend religious services?**

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Almost every week
- Once or twice a month
- a few times a year
- Never

*** 13. How important is it for a person of your religion to attend religious services?**

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not too important
- Not important at all

7. Lots of things come up that keep people form attending religious services even if they want to. Apart from the occasional weddings, baptisms, or funerals, how often do you attend religious services?
8. How involved are you as a volunteer in your local congregation? (Deacon, Sunday school teacher, etc.)
9. Approximately what percentage of your total household income do you give to churches and other religious organizations in an average year?
10. How often do you read Scripture outside of religious services?
11. How often do you pray outside of religious services?
12. How much guidance would you say your religion provides you in your day-to-day living?
13. How important is it for a person of your religion to attend religious services?
14. How important is it for a person of your religion to pray outside of religious services?
15. How important is it for a person of your religion to read Scripture outside of religious services?
16. How important is it for a person of your religion to give a percentage of his or her income to churches and other religious organizations?
17. How important is it for a person of your religion to work as a volunteer in the local congregation?
18. In your opinion, which of these activities is/are the most important for a person in your religion?

Appendix D

Moral Anxiety Questionnaire

The following appendix includes a sample of what the question would have looked like on the website followed by a complete list of statements from the MAQ.

Please answer all of the questions to the best of your ability.

*** 19. I sometimes worry that I may not be living up to the ethical standards I have set for myself.**

True

False

Moral Anxiety Questionnaire — True or False

19. I sometimes worry that I may not be living up to the ethical standards I have set for myself.
20. I have a tendency to worry about not following the teachings of my religion as closely as I should.
21. I have a tendency to worry about having disappointed other people.
22. I sometimes worry that I may speak angrily to someone.
23. I sometimes worry that I may gossip about someone.
24. I sometimes worry that I may be receiving special privileges that are denied to others.
25. I sometimes worry about being more fortunate than someone else.
26. I have a tendency to worry that I may not be giving enough time to my schoolwork or to my job.
27. I have a tendency to worry that I may do things which are inconsiderate of other people's feelings.
28. I sometimes worry that I may not be giving enough time or attention to members of my family.
29. I sometimes worry that I may be too selfish or self-centered.
30. I sometimes worry about not always giving my help when it's asked for.
31. I sometimes worry that I may be taking advantage of someone else.
32. I have a tendency to worry that I may not love other member of my family as much as I should.
33. I sometimes worry about not being very cooperative.

34. I have a tendency to worry about things that I have done in the past.
35. I sometimes worry that I may not do enough for others who are less fortunate than myself.
36. I sometimes worry about being too impatient with other people.
37. I have a tendency to worry about breaking a promise to someone.
38. I sometimes worry about feeling uncomfortable around handicapped or disabled people.
39. I sometimes worry about not being grateful enough for what I have.
40. I sometimes worry about having hostile feelings toward someone else.
41. I sometimes worry about not liking someone.
42. I sometimes worry that I may be causing hardship for someone else.
43. I sometimes worry that I may do things in the future that I will later be ashamed of.
44. I sometimes worry about being insecure.
45. I have a tendency to worry about being too harsh in my judgments of other people.
46. I sometimes worry about weather I am worthwhile person.
47. I sometimes worry about behaving in an immature manner.
48. I sometimes worry about being too concerned with money or personal possessions.
49. I sometimes worry about being too greedy or ambitious.
50. I sometimes worry about acting rude or impolite toward others.
51. I sometimes worry about being too much of a pleasure-seeker.
52. I sometimes worry that I may not be fulfilling all of my responsibilities.

Appendix E

Death Anxiety Scale

The following appendix includes a sample of what the question would have looked like on the website followed by a complete list of statements from the DAS.

Please answer all of the questions to the best of your ability.

*** 53. I am very much afraid to die.**

True

False

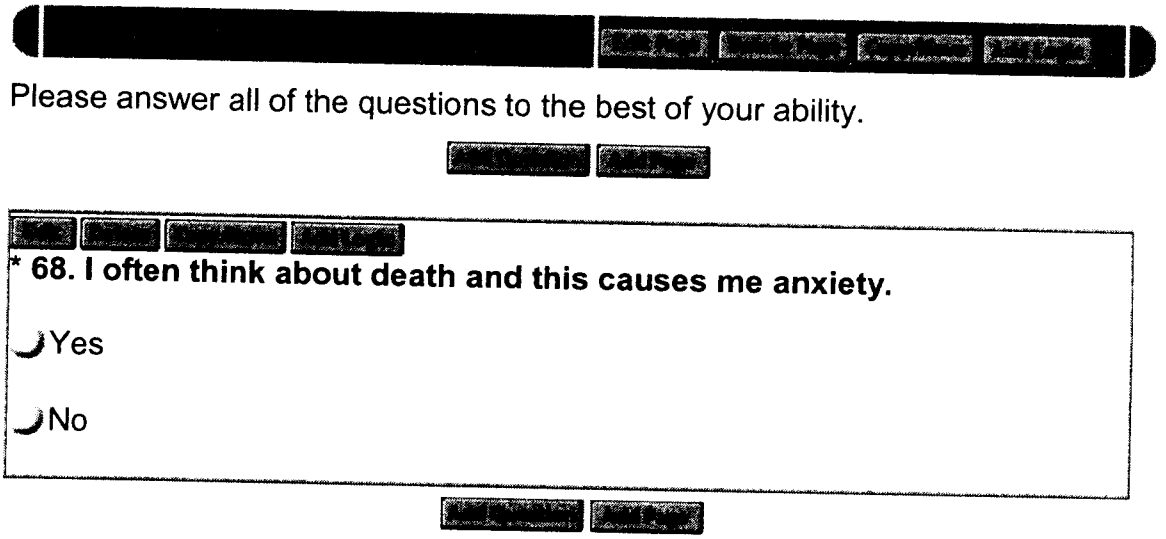
Templer's Death Anxiety Scale (DAS) True or False

53. I am very much afraid to die.
54. The thought of death seldom enters my mind.
55. It doesn't make me nervous when people talk about death.
56. I dread to think about having to have an operation.
57. I am not at all afraid to die.
58. I am not particularly afraid of getting cancer.
59. The thought of death never bothers me.
60. I am often distressed by the way time flies so very rapidly.
61. I fear dying a painful death.
62. The subject of life after death troubles me greatly.
63. I am really scared of having a heart attack.
64. I often think about how short life is.
65. I shudder when I hear people talking about a World War III.
66. The sight of a dead body is horrifying to me.
67. I feel that the future holds nothing for me to fear.

Appendix F

Existential Anxiety Questionnaire

The following appendix includes a sample of what the question would have looked like on the website followed by a complete list of statements from the EAQ.



Existential Anxiety Questionnaire (EAQ)	Yes or No
68. I often think about death and this causes me anxiety.	
69. I am not anxious about fate because I am resigned to it.	
70. I often feel anxious because I am worried that life might have no meaning.	
71. I am not worried about nor think about being guilty.	
72. I often feel anxious because of feelings of guilt.	
73. I often feel anxious because I feel condemned.	
74. I never think about emptiness.	
75. I often think that the things that were once important in life are empty.	
76. I never feel anxious about being condemned.	
77. I am not anxious about death because I am prepared for whatever it may bring.	
78. I often think about fate and it causes me to feel anxious.	
79. I am not anxious about fate because I am sure things will work out.	
80. I know that life has meaning.	

Appendix G

Existential Anxiety Scale

The following appendix includes a sample of what the question would have looked like on the website followed by a complete list of statements from the EAS.

Please answer all of the questions to the best of your ability.

*** 81. I frequently have the feeling that my life has little or no purpose.**

True

False

Existential Anxiety Scale (EAS) True or False

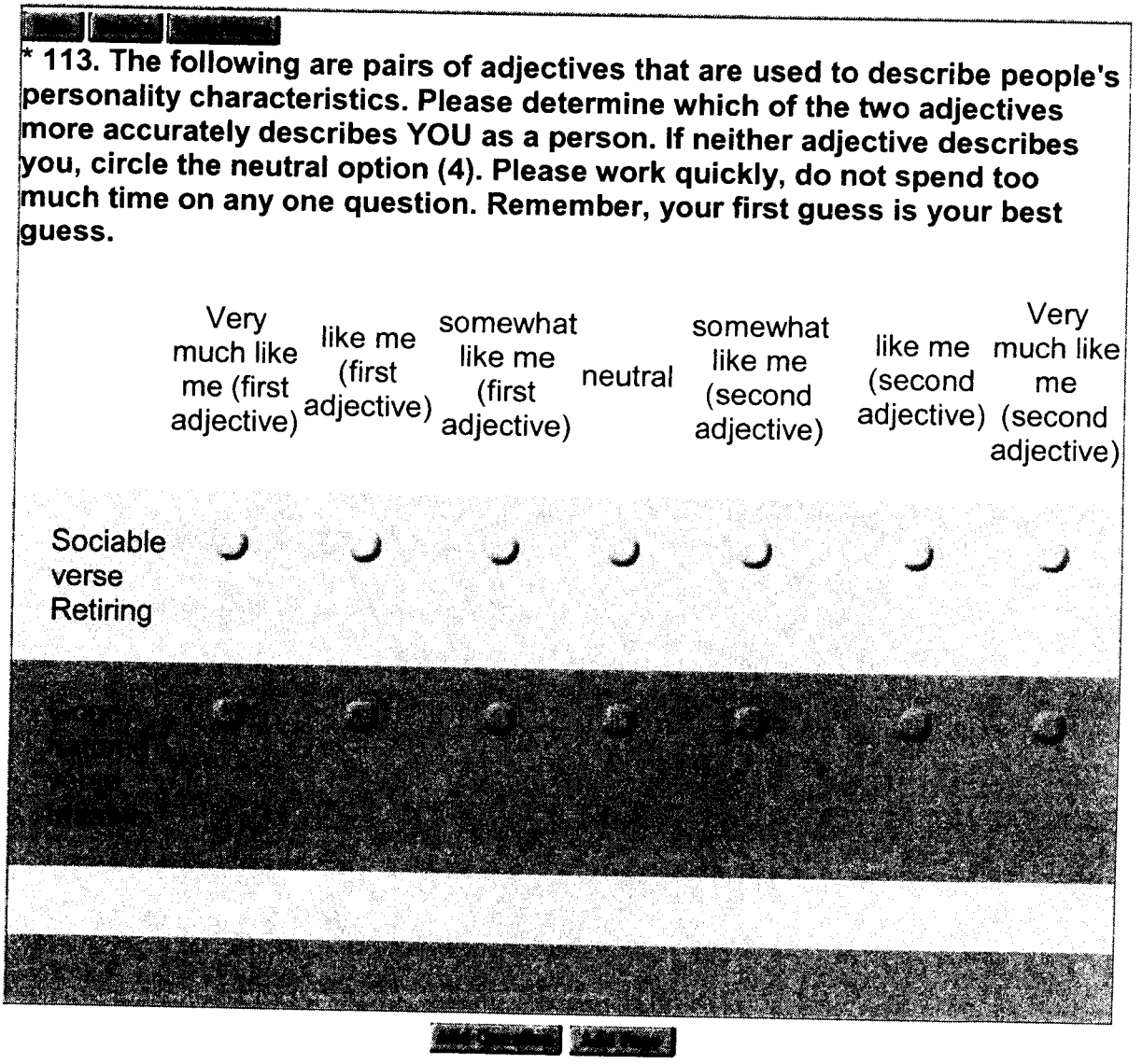
81. I frequently have the feeling that my life has little or no purpose.
82. I mostly feel bored and indifferent by what is going on around me.
83. I find life exciting and challenging.
84. I often feel that my accomplishments are pretty worthless.
85. I usually feel that I am merely existing not living.
86. I generally feel that it is useless to discuss things with others because they just never really understand.
87. I feel that I have more to look forward to in life than most others.
88. My daily activities mostly seem to be rather pointless.
89. I generally feel depressed when I think of the future.
90. I have never found and type of work that I really enjoy.
91. My feelings don't seem to mean anything to anyone else.
92. I find religion to be rather empty.
93. I feel that it is useless to try to convince anyone else of anything.
94. I often feel that I have little to look forward to.
95. I do not feel that life is meaningless.
96. I just never seem to enjoy things the way others seem to.
97. I generally feel that I am getting nowhere, no matter how much effort I put forth.

Appendix H

Bipolar Adjective Ratings Scale

The following appendix includes a sample of what the question would have looked like on the website followed by a complete list of adjectives from the B.A.R.S. The instrument was slightly modified from its original form; the online version displayed the adjectives side by side rather than in a continuum format and presented the responses after the adjectives rather then in-between them.

Please answer all of the questions to the best of your ability.



Bipolar Adjective Rating Scale- is a 7 point Likert scale which presents two opposite characteristics for the individual to choose between; ranging from:

(1) Very much like me for the first characteristic, (2) like me, (3) somewhat like me, (4) to neutral, to (5) somewhat like me, (6) like me, (7) very much like me for the second characteristic.

Opposite compared are:

1. Sociable 1—2—3—4—5—6—7— Retiring
2. Good-natured→ Irritable
3. Conscientious → Negligent
4. Calm → Worry
5. Conventional → Original
6. Sober → Fun Loving
7. Ruthless → Soft-hearted
8. Careless → Careful
9. Nervous → At Ease
10. Imaginative → Down to Earth
11. Affectionate → Reserved
12. Courteous → Rude
13. Reliable → Undependable
14. Relaxed → High Strung
15. Uncreative → Creative
16. Aloof → Friendly
17. Selfish → Selfless
18. Lazy → Hardworking
19. Emotional → Unemotional

20. Simple → Complex

21. Spontaneous → Inhibited

22. Helpful → Uncooperative

23. Organized → Disorganized

24. Even Tempered → Temperamental

25. Curious → Uncurious

26. Quiet → Talkative

27. Broad Interests → Narrow Interests

28. Callous → Sympathetic

29. Lax → Scrupulous

30. Insecure → Secure

31. Active → Passive

32. Trusting → Suspicious

33. Emotionally Stable → Unstable

34. Not Impulse Ridden → Impulse Ridden

35. Unadventurous → Daring

36. Loner → Joiner

37. Open-minded → Narrow-minded

38. Self-Disciplined → Weak-willed

39. Self-satisfied → Self-pitying

40. Conservative → Liberal

41. Passionate → Unfeeling

42. Stingy → Generous

43. Sloppy → Neat

44. Self-Conscious → Comfortable

45. Conforming → Independent

46. Cold → Warm

47. Acquiescent → Antagonistic

48. Punctual → Late

49. Impatient → Patient

50. Untraditional → Traditional

51. Not Lonely → Lonely

52. Critical → Lenient

53. Impractical → Practical

54. Vulnerable → Hardy

55. Analytical → Unanalytical

56. Dominant → Submissive

57. Disagreeable → Agreeable

58. Deliberate → Thoughtless

59. Not Envious → Envious

60. Unartistic → Artistic

61. Task-oriented → Person-oriented

62. Flexible → Stubborn

63. Aimless → Ambitious

64. Objective → Subjective

65. Timid → Bold

66. Serious → Cheerful

67. Helpless → Self-reliant

68. Gullible → Cynical

69. Business-like → Playful

70. Manipulative → Straightforward

71. Unenergetic → Energetic

72. Humble → Proud

73. Knowledgeable → Ignorant

74. Quitting → Persevering

75. Intelligent → Stupid

76. Unfair → Fair

77. Perceptive → Imperceptive

78. Uncultured → Cultured

79. Prefer variety → Prefer routine

80. Vengeful → Forgiving

Thank you for considering to participate in this study; unfortunately we are unable to proceed without your consent. If you arrived at this message by mistake please feel free to start over. Thank you again for your consideration.

Thank you for your time in participating in this study. If you have any questions feel free to contact me at eternalparadox9669@yahoo.com

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